

their families and caregivers at hospitals and care centers throughout Maryland. In addition to delivering books to participating hospitals and health care centers, Connor spends time with patients and their loved ones. "I've shared a smile and positive moment with a lot of people," said Connor. "I hope that these efforts have made a difference to those who really needed something to laugh about." I am sure they did.

Christopher Anderson, a sophomore at Westminster High was named a finalist and will receive a bronze medal. I heartily applaud Christopher for his initiative in seeking to make his community a better place to live by renovating an outdoor break area for the Association for Retarded Citizens of Carroll County to make it accessible to disabled residents. Inspired by his uncle who has Down syndrome, he recruited more than 40 volunteers and raised \$3,000 for the project. Christopher and his volunteers removed old rock, built special picnic tables, replaced wooden sidewalks and planted trees and shrubs in order to make the area handicapped-accessible. It will continue to have a positive impact on the lives of others for years to come.

Young volunteers like Connor and Christopher are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow. The dedication and commitment by Connor Dantzler to sick hospital patients and Christopher Anderson to disabled individuals should fill all of us with pride that America's community spirit is strong. On behalf of the residents of Maryland's Sixth District I am honored to publicly thank and congratulate Connor and Christopher for their volunteer efforts. You give us hope and confidence that America's future will be led by a new generation of inspiring and compassionate leaders.

#### TAIWAN'S LEADERSHIP ON GLOBAL ISSUES

#### HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2008*

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Madam Speaker, in the 6½ years since terrorists attacked the American homeland, our government has undertaken a series of steps to prepare for, deter, and ultimately stop future attacks from occurring. In advancing these objectives, it has been essential to partner with like-minded nations to ensure security and freedom for all our citizens. In this regard, I would like to take the opportunity to express the appreciation of many in the Congress to President Chen Shui-bian of Taiwan as he prepares to leave office later this month.

During President Chen's time in office, Taiwan has demonstrated time and again its commitment to global security and cooperation. Such actions have been forthcoming despite the preoccupation of an existential threat facing it from across the Taiwan Strait.

After 9/11, Taiwan immediately opened its airspace to U.S. military aircraft transiting Pacific routes to Afghanistan. It subsequently partnered with our government and others in the Container Security Initiative, which seeks to prevent illicit cargo from reaching rogue entities around the world. Furthermore, Taiwan has committed over \$100 million to recovery

efforts in Afghanistan, making it one of the most significant contributors to coalition efforts there.

Recognizing that global security can be advanced in a variety of ways, Taiwan has been a leader in addressing public health issues internationally. Struck by SARS in 2003, Taiwan acted swiftly to share information with other nations that helped limit its spread. Soon thereafter, Taiwan's experience in tackling avian flu was again made available to the international community in order to deter that contagion's deadly proliferation.

Beyond these multilateral efforts, Taiwan has also developed one of the most extensive bilateral development assistance programs in the world. For instance, it has established 36 long-term technical missions in 30 partner countries, focusing on capacity building, agriculture, fisheries, horticulture, livestock, handicrafts, medicine, transportation, industry, mining, electricity generation, printing, vocational training, trade and investment. Taiwan allocates approximately 100,000 tons of rice annually as humanitarian foreign aid. After the South Asia tsunami occurred in December 2004, the Taiwanese government provided \$50 million in initial relief assistance, and co-operated with international non-governmental organizations in additional relief efforts. It also provided more than 355 tons of relief materials to tsunami-affected countries.

These and other measures undertaken by Taiwan over the past several years are to be commended. Under the leadership of President Chen, his government has served as a model for others seeking to play a constructive role in the international community. I encourage continued leadership by Taiwan as a new president prepares to assume office, and can assure him of America's enduring partnership in these efforts.

#### CONSOLIDATED NATURAL RESOURCES ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

#### HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 29, 2008*

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the House of Representatives for taking action on the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program today.

The Platte River has undergone extensive development for irrigation, power generation, and municipal water uses. The river system today contains 15 major dams and reservoirs and provides water for about 3.5 million people.

Existing facilities on the river provide hydroelectric power, irrigation water, flood control, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat. Substantial portions of the economies of the Platte River basin States—Wyoming, Colorado, and Nebraska—are based on water supplied by the Platte River.

In 1997, the three States and the U.S. Department of the Interior signed an agreement to pursue a basinwide cooperative recovery implementation program to improve and maintain habitat for four threatened and endangered species which use the Platte River.

The legislation we are discussing today is designed to implement a multi-state coopera-

tive approach to assist in the conservation and recovery of habitat for the Platte River's endangered and threatened species and to help prevent the need to list more species under the Endangered Species Act. The bill would also provide regulatory certainty to the cities and industries which rely on flows of the river.

As we move forward with the implementation of the program, positive and negative economic impacts must be assessed and considered in order to minimize adverse effects of the recovery efforts.

This legislation is the first step of many to protect and recover species and provide long-term water use for our communities.

#### THE RISKS AND REWARDS OF THE POPE'S VISIT TO THE U.S.

#### HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2008*

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD today an article that was written by a constituent of mine, Thomas J. Carty, PhD, Associate Professor of History and American Studies at Springfield College in Springfield, MA. His article is entitled, *The Risks and Rewards of the Pope's Visit to the U.S.*, and it outlines the history of the interaction of politics and religion as it related to papal visits in the past. I thought it was a pertinent piece in light of Pope Benedict's recent visit to Washington, DC and New York City.

#### THE RISKS AND REWARDS OF THE POPE'S VISIT TO THE U.S.

(By Thomas J. Carty)

Pope Benedict XVI's meeting this week with a U.S. president during an election year demonstrates how Americans increasingly tolerate the confluence of religion and politics. While George Bush does not face the prospect of election this year, his meeting with Pope Benedict may affect the presidential campaign. Bush's policies have both delighted and disappointed the Pope. The president's opposition to legalized abortion and embryonic stem-cell research earned him praise by John Paul II, but this pope also critiqued Bush and his father for resorting excessively to war in Panama, the Persian Gulf, and Iraq. For Bush, this meeting offers an opportunity to burnish his legacy as a defender of traditional values.

Bush can maximize benefit from this meeting by studying the successes and failures of Lyndon Johnson, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton. Johnson's 1965 decision to greet Pope Paul VI strained traditional diplomatic protocol because no pope had previously set foot in the United States. Prior to the pope's landing in New York in order to deliver a speech at the United Nations, therefore, Johnson arranged elaborate plans to avoid appearing biased in favor of the Catholic Church. The president agreed to wait in New York's Waldorf-Astoria hotel for Pope Paul VI to visit Johnson's suite so that the president could deny having initiated the unofficial summit. Johnson certainly hoped such appeals to the pope might have helped his standing among Catholics in an eventual run for reelection. Yet the pope's public criticisms of U.S. bombing in Southeast Asia contributed to Johnson's later decision to withdraw from the 1968 presidential campaign.

By contrast, Pope John Paul II boosted Ronald Reagan's political popularity among